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ABSTRACT

Guidelines to help parents select day care centers are presented in this book. Four aspects (the caregiver, the setting, the quality cf the day care activities, and the cost of care) which constitute good quality day care and which parents need to ccnsider before beginning their search are discussed in Part One. Suggestions for the selection of a particular type of day care such as family day care, in-home care, and the day care center, are included in Part Two. This section also includes a checklist designed to help parents determine whether their selection is the best arrangement for their children. Some common day care problems (such as the caregiver who does not talk with parents about their children, or the child who continues to be unhappy about the day care after time has gone by) and some suggested ways to handle these problems are discussed in Part Three. People, national organizations, government agencies, and publications that can be of use tc parents in the process of selecting day care are listed in Part Four. (Author/MP)

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Office of Human Development Services
Administration for Children, Youth and Families
Day Care Division

Working with State and Local Agencies to Create Caring Communities

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A Parent's Guide to Day Care

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A MESSAGE TO PARENTS

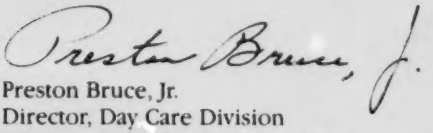
The Day Care Division is pleased to provide you with this copy of *A Parent's Guide to Day Care*. We set high goals for this guide. It was written to:

- Give you the information you need as you make the difficult decision to place your child in care
- Help you select a suitable day care arrangement for your child
- Help you feel confident about the care you select
- Enable you to improve your day care arrangement
- Help improve the quality of day care nationwide by providing parents with information on what day care should offer children.

The decisions you make concerning your child and day care are some of the most important you will make. You know they must be made with care and consideration. This guide was written to help you with those decisions. It does not say there is one right way to choose day care. Rather, it contains guidelines and suggestions for you to consider as you think about your own family's situation.

As this guide was developed, we sought the advice of day care professionals. But more important, we sought the advice of parents: parents from every ethnic background, from every section of the country, and from every social and economic group. It is the concerns they voiced that we have tried to address.

At the back of this guide you will find a stamped, self-addressed evaluation form. Please take a few minutes to fill it out. We are depending on you, the reader, to help us make the next version of this guide even more responsive to the needs of families everywhere.



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USING THIS GUIDE

The person who cares for your child can be known by many names. Day care provider, teacher, caregiver, sitter, grandparent, and aunt are the names used most often. In this guide, we generally use the word "caregiver." Although some caregivers are men — and that number seems to be increasing — most are women. Therefore, to make reading easier, we refer to the caregiver as "she." When we talk about "your child," we mean all of your children who need care. And when we say "parent," we mean *you* — the adult who has accepted major responsibility for bringing up a child.

This guide is designed to provide a complete picture of day care. It may contain information that does not apply to your family's situation right now. To tell whether you need to read a section, scan the headlines in the lefthand columns or the boldface headlines in the text. That way, if you are not seeking in-home care or do not have a school-age child, for example, you can move on to information you do need. You can also use the table of contents to help you select what you need or want to read. Of course, if you can, we urge you to read the entire guide.

Part 1 tells you all about day care. It discusses what makes up good — or quality — day care. It talks about how you may feel about putting your child in day care. And it lists some things you'll have to think about — the caregiver, the day care setting, and the costs of care — before you begin your search.

Part 2 takes you through the steps necessary to find and keep a good day care arrangement, depending on the type of care you select. The checklist at the end of Part 2 will help you find out whether the arrangement you are looking into — or already have — can provide your child with a safe, secure, and happy experience.

Part 3 suggests solutions to some common problems that can come up in any day care arrangement. It shows you

some ways to improve the arrangement you now have.

Part 4 lists some people and places that can help you in your search for good day care.

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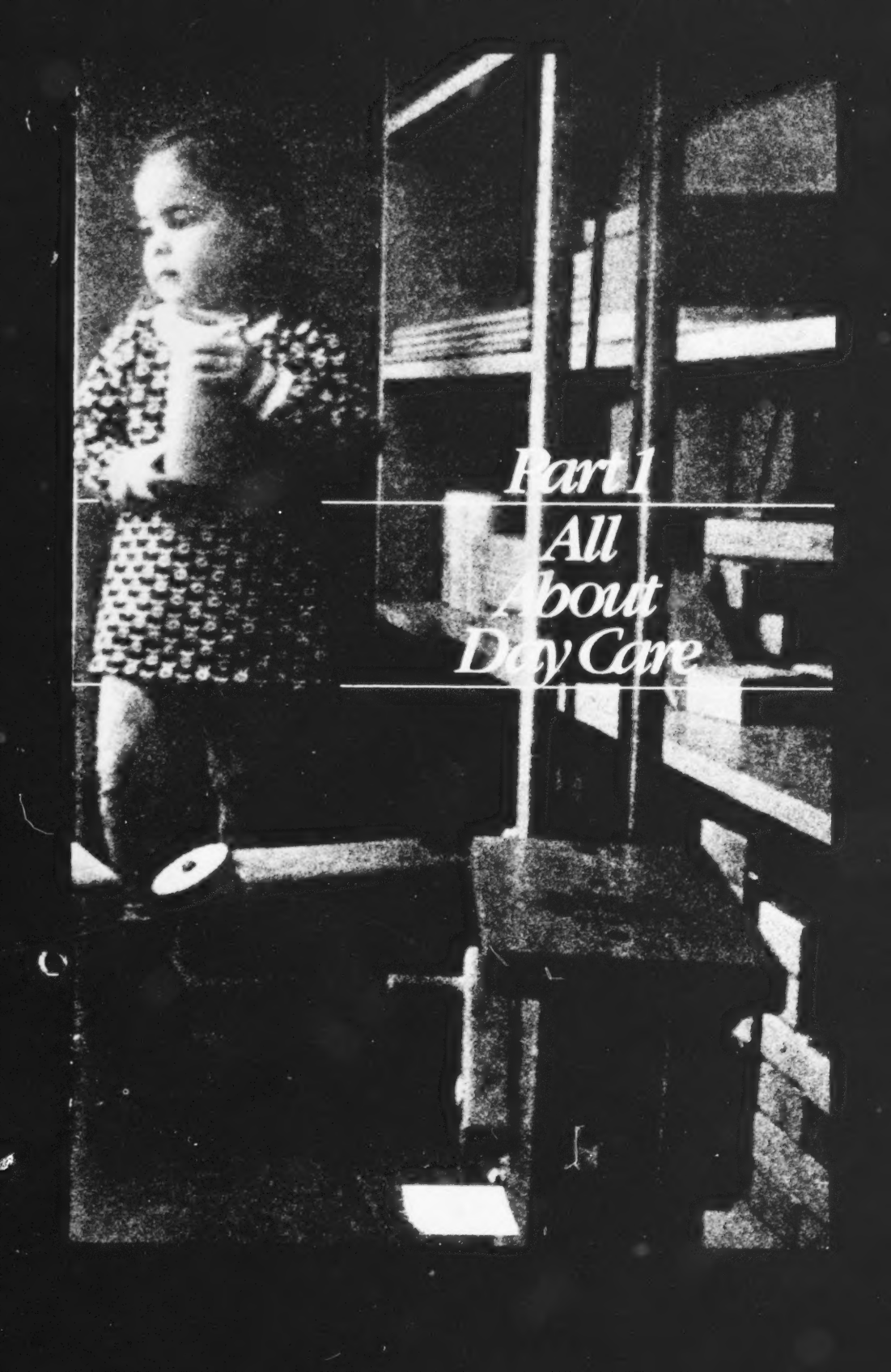


Part I
All About Day Care

- Talkative Willie is in the second grade and gets home from school by 3. There's no one there to talk to, so he watches TV by himself until his mother returns from work at 6.
- Ten-month-old Elena has just learned to walk and wants to get into everything. But she spends most of her day in a playpen at the apartment of the woman across the hall. The neighbor is too busy to play with Elena much. So Elena fidgets and naps in the playpen until 2 when her mother's training course is over.
- Four-year-old Joey has no brothers or sisters or nearby neighbors to play with. He's full of energy and raring to go. His mother is going back to school soon. His parents think now would be a good time to find him some playmates.
- Chan has always been a good student. But lately, his grades have fallen off and his fifth grade teacher wonders why. His mother has been ill and must rest most of the time. His dad goes to work at 4. So Chan comes home right after school, fixes supper for his little sisters, and helps them get ready for bed. By the time he gets to his homework, it's late and he's tired.

These children are part of four very different families who have one thing in common: They all could be helped by good day care.

Perhaps a relative or neighbor could take care of Willie, in her home or his, until his mother comes home. Then he'd have someone to talk to and be with. Or he could go to a day care center for supervised play after school.

For Elena, good day care would be having a sitter who takes the time to play with her and to help her learn as she walks.

Joey might find the friends he needs at a day care center or at a sitter's home.

And Chan might do better in school if a sitter came to his house for a few hours each evening to give him some time for himself.

What Is Good Day Care?

Good day care — or quality care as it is sometimes called — is made up of these things:

- A **caregiver** who provides warm and loving care and guidance for your child and who works with you and your family to make sure your child grows and learns in the best way possible.
- A **setting** (the home or center) that keeps your child safe, secure, and healthy.
- **Activities** that help your child grow mentally, physically, socially, and emotionally.

In short, good day care is care that meets your child's needs as he or she develops. Good day care can be provided by relatives, friends, neighbors, or people you don't already know.

How Do You Feel About Day Care?

Even if you are sure you have made a good day care choice, you may still have mixed feelings about placing your child in day care. You may worry about the care your child is getting. It may bother you that someone else is influencing your child's feelings and opinions. You may feel anxious or guilty because you are leaving your child in someone else's care.

It may help you to know that studies have found that a child's family and parents are always the most important influences on him or her, even when the child is in care all day. Caregivers do not take over your role as parent. They are concerned adults who will play a part in your child's life.

WHAT KINDS OF DAY CARE ARE THERE?

Many people think day care means only a child care center or a nursery school. But there are several kinds of day care, each offering special things. These are the three main types:

- In-home care
- Family day care
- Center-based care.

Each type of care is discussed in detail in Part 2. You can probably find one or more of these types in your area. You may prefer one type, but keep in mind that any of the three can be right for your child if it provides the warmth, supervision, and individual attention your child needs.

You may also want to use more than one kind of care. For example, you might want center-based care for your preschooler and an in-home caregiver for your infant. Or you might want to combine two types for one child: Perhaps a preschool program at a day care center in the morning and a family day care home in the afternoon. These "mixed care" arrangements give you even more day care choices.

WHAT DO YOU NEED TO THINK ABOUT?

As you begin to look for a day care arrangement, you'll have several important things to consider:

- What type of caregiver would be best for my child?
- What should the setting provide to keep my child safe, secure, and healthy, and help him or her grow and learn?
- How much will the arrangement cost? Can I get financial help?

The Caregiver

The caregiver is the most important to think about. Many parents say they are willing to put up with an older building or well-used toys and equipment if the caregiver is warm and loving toward their children. Of course, the way *you* feel about a caregiver will tell you a lot about whether she is right for your child. At the end of Part 2 you'll find a checklist of things to look for in a caregiver.

Remember, because children's needs change as they grow, the caregiver you select should be able to meet your child's needs at different stages of growth.

If you are considering day care for your infant, you may feel so close to your child that you are reluctant to leave him or her in the care of someone else. Babies are totally dependent on those who care for them. So you'll want to be especially careful to find an arrangement where your baby is cared for in a safe place by loving people.

If you have a toddler who needs day care, you'll want to find a caregiver who encourages your child to explore and learn while keeping him or her safe from harm. Your toddler is always on the move, and wants to climb on anything and get into any empty space. Adults who care for toddlers find it a joyful — but sometimes trying — experience!

If your preschooler needs care, look for someone who welcomes your child's curiosity, many questions, and enthusiasm — and who has the energy to keep up! Parents often ask why preschool children spend most of their time in day care "playing." A good caregiver understands that through play, children develop new skills and ideas and use their creativity and imagination.

If you have a school-age child, you may feel that day care is not such a pressing need anymore. But many young school-age children will need exactly the same kind of care they had before they began school. In fact, most States have laws that require children below a certain age to be cared for by an adult at all times. Even older school-age children may not be ready for the responsibility of being on their own for several hours each day. Those hours are often lonely and wasted ones. Some children may spend too much time watching television or getting into things their parents wouldn't allow if they were there. In emergencies they may not remember what to do. Children who are alone before school may not eat a good breakfast, put on the right clothes for the weather, or get to school on time.

The Setting

The day care setting is also important. What are the facilities (the home or the center building) like? Is the equipment (the games, toys, furniture) suitable for your child? What health and safety measures have been taken? What is there for your child to do?

If care is being provided in your home, it's your job to provide the right things. Work closely with the caregiver to make sure your home has everything your child needs. Your own home, just like a family day care home or a center, should be a safe and healthful place for your child.

The checklist in Part 2 lists many of the health and safety measures that should be taken wherever children are cared for. It also lists some activities that should be available for children as they grow.

The Cost of Care

Most likely, one of your biggest concerns is the cost of day care. If you are planning for more than one child, cost becomes even more important. While it is true that many good care arrangements are expensive, it is just as true there are good ones that don't cost so much. You may be able to arrange with a relative or friend to provide warm, dependable care for free or in exchange for your help with something else.

Day care costs vary widely, depending on the type of care you use, the days and hours you need care, the part of the country you live in, and the individual arrangement between you and the caregiver.

To find out what sitters and family day care providers charge in your area, check the newspaper classified section under Babysitting Services, Domestic Services, or Situations Wanted. To find out what centers charge, call two or three listed in the telephone Yellow Pages under Day Nurseries and Child Care.

When you are planning your child care budget, be sure to include any transportation costs: Will you be asked to pay the caregiver's car, bus, or taxi fare to and from your home?

What will it cost you and your child to get to and from the sitter? Does the center charge extra for providing transportation?

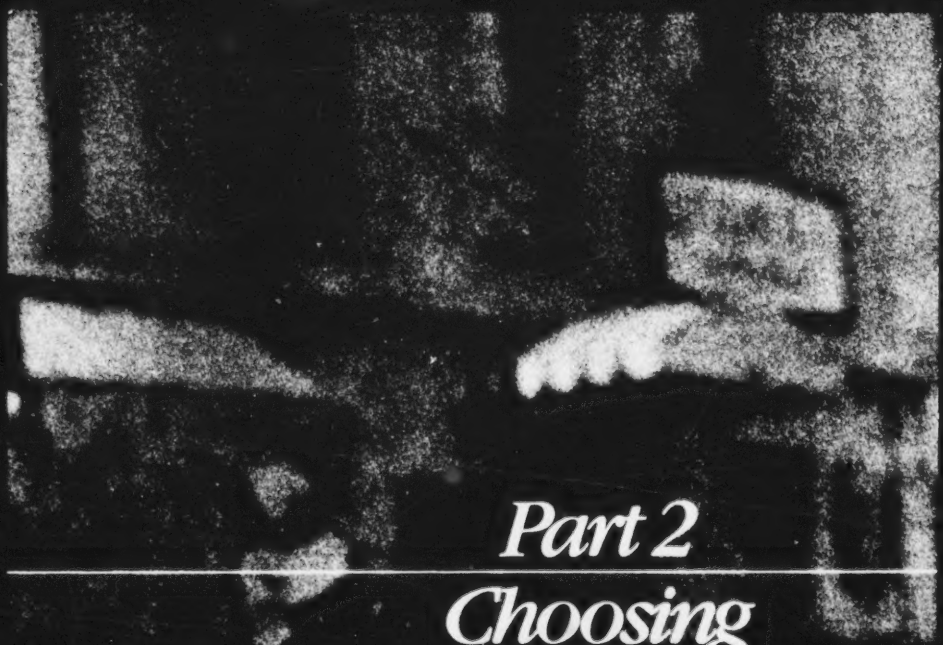
Financial help. Some families may be eligible for local government assistance with their child care expenses. Call your city or county government office that deals with social services or child care to see if you qualify.

Local service clubs and religious groups sometimes offer day care money and scholarships. Some places to ask include the community coordinated child care agency, clergymen's associations, the YWCA, the Salvation Army, Lion's Clubs, Catholic Charities, or United Jewish Appeal. Many local United Way chapters help pay for child care programs.

If you are looking into center care, ask the center director if your child is eligible for a scholarship or if you can volunteer your services in return for part of the fee. Ask if sliding fee scales are used. These scales mean that the rate is based on your income: the lower your income, the lower the rate.

There are a number of Federal programs that help with child care costs. To find out if you meet the income and other eligibility requirements, contact your local, county, or State welfare, social services, or human resources department. Head Start, Title XX, Title I, the Work Incentive Program (WIN), and the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) are among the Federal programs that can help pay for day care. (Part 4 of this guide lists places you can write for more information about those programs.)

Income tax credit. If you use child care in order to work, you may qualify for a Federal income tax credit of up to 20 percent of your child care expenses. Check with your local Internal Revenue Service office for current information. (Be sure to save proof of all your child care expenses!)



Part 2
Choosing Day Care

GETTING STARTED

Finding Day Care

No matter which type of day care you plan to use, your first job is to get the names and telephone numbers of some caregivers or centers. If you follow some of these suggestions, you should soon have a list of possible day care arrangements:

- Ask relatives, friends, neighbors, or co-workers.
- Look on community bulletin boards in grocery stores, laundromats, and other local stores for day care notices.
- Ask your child's doctor, the public health nurse, the well-baby clinic, or the public health clinic.
- Ask your local government social services, day care licensing, health, or welfare office for a list of licensed day care centers or family day care homes.
- Read the classified sections of community and daily newspapers under such headings as Situations Wanted, Domestic Services, Babysitting Services, or Child Care.
- Run an ad in the local paper or on community bulletin boards in local stores. Provide as much information as you can. List such things as the number and ages of your children, the hours and days you need care, the area where you live, and the type of care you want. This information will help possible caregivers decide whether to call you.
- Check the telephone Yellow Pages under Day Nurseries and Child Care.
- Ask at your church, synagogue, or other place of worship.
- Get in touch with a foreign language newspaper, church, school, or community agency if you are seeking a day care arrangement where a certain language is spoken or where certain customs or religions are practiced.
- Check with retired people in your neighborhood or with local retirement homes or senior citizen clubs.

- Check with local chapters of women's organizations, local community coordinated child care organizations, parents' groups, and child care associations.
- Call an employment service if you plan to hire an in-home caregiver.
- Ask your local welfare department for the telephone number of a homemaker service. This service can sometimes provide temporary child care help in emergencies.
- Ask at public schools, "Y" groups such as the YWCA or YWHA, and community centers about responsible teenagers who can provide after-school care.
- Talk to parents whose children go to the centers or family day care homes in which you are interested.
- Check with local colleges or universities, which sometimes have day care programs.
- Call the local day care or social services information and referral service.

Screening By Phone

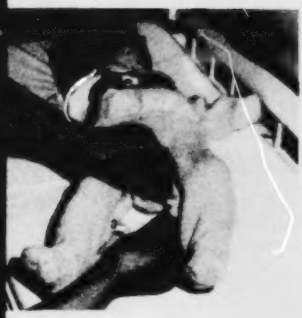
The telephone is a fast way to get an idea of what the people or centers on your list are like. It may be easier to spend 5 or 10 minutes talking to each person on the telephone than to meet all of them face to face.

If you are looking for a sitter to come to your home, you might want to ask these questions:

- Have you worked with children before? What were their ages?
- Why do you like working with children?
- What kinds of things do you like to do with children?
- What other kinds of work experience have you had?
- Why did you leave your last job?
- Are you considering other types of work?
- Do you have the names of people for whom you have worked before (references)?

Listen to the questions each person asks. They can help you know how much interest and experience that person has. Beware of people

who want to talk only about the hours, the pay, and the amount of work required.



If you are looking for someone who will take care of your child in her home, these questions can help you decide whether to visit:

- What experience does the caregiver have?
- How many other children are being cared for in the home? What are their ages?
- Is the home close to your home, work, or school?
- What is the cost of care for the hours you need?
- Does the caregiver have a list of references you can call?

When you talk to day care center directors, be sure to ask these questions:

- What ages does the center accept?
- What hours of care are offered?
- What is the daily program of activities like?
- Will there be a vacancy when you need to enroll your child?
- What is the fee? If you need financial help, are there scholarships or sliding fee scales?
- Does the center have a list of references you can call?

Checking References

If a caregiver or center seems promising, be sure to get some references before you hang up. You can either call the references right away — which can help you narrow your list — or wait until you have met the caregiver or visited the center.

When you do call, listen to the reference's tone of voice, as well as to what is said. Does he or she:

- Sound slightly troubled or cautious?
- Pause a long time before answering your questions?

Most people don't like to give a bad reference. The following questions may help you get a frank response:

- Would you choose this person or center again?
- What did you like most — and least — about this person or center?

Deciding What You Need

The checklist at the end of Part 2 can help you decide which things in a day care arrangement are most important for your child and your family.

If you are looking for care outside your home, decide whether to bring your child with you on the first visit or wait until later. If you will be visiting several homes or centers, it may be best to plan a second visit with your child after you've narrowed your list to one or two.

Your next job will be getting to know about the person who may be caring for your child. If you plan to use only one type of care, you can turn right to the section that discusses that type. If you are not sure, or plan to use more than one type, you may want to read each section.

IN-HOME CARE

Have you ever had a babysitter watch your child while you went out for the evening? If so, you've already used in-home care.

With in-home care, someone comes to, or lives in, your home. Very often, an in-home caregiver is a relative — perhaps a grandmother or an aunt — or a friend. Or the caregiver can be an employee who receives regular wages.

If your family's situation is similar to any of the situations discussed below, you may want to consider using an in-home caregiver.

If you have three or more children who need care, you may find that in-home care is less expensive than some other kinds. In addition, in-home care will save you from the worry of trying to get several children, all

with different schedules, to and from a day care arrangement outside your home.

If your child needs special care, because of a physical, mental, or emotional problem, your own home is a familiar, secure place that may already have any special equipment your child requires.

If you need care at night, an in-home caregiver can be there when needed without upsetting your child's regular schedule.

If you need only after-school care, many older people welcome the chance to be a "grandparent" for a few hours a day, and teenagers often are eager to get regular babysitting jobs.

If you have an infant or toddler, you may prefer not to have to take him or her out in bad weather.

If you need help with household chores, your in-home caregiver may be able to handle them. (Just make sure she understands that the care and safety of your child comes first!)

You should also know, however, that in-home care can be very expensive, especially if you have only one or two children and are paying someone a salary for full-time work. Keep in mind also that if you have only one child, he or she may not have the chance to be with other children, to learn how to share and get along.

Selecting An In-Home Caregiver

An interview with each possible in-home caregiver gives you a chance to exchange information. It lets you see how that caregiver and your child react to each other. It also lets you see if you feel comfortable with that person.

If a relative or a friend will be caring for your child, you may feel no interview is needed. But it's still a good idea to share ideas about child care — even if you do it over a cup of coffee at the kitchen table. You may also feel you do not have as much control over the care of your child as you want. What's important is

for both you and your relative or friend to be flexible. You may find that you can accept a different way of doing things if your child is still well cared for.

If you are interviewing someone you don't know, begin by finding out about the caregiver, rather than by describing the kind of person you are looking for. Some good questions to ask are:

- What kinds of TV programs do you think children should watch?
- What activities do you do with children?
- What do you do when a child disobeys?
- What do you do when you become angry with a child?
- What are some things you do with children to help them learn?
- How do you feel about combining housework with child care?

If you are interviewing teenagers for after-school care, pay attention to their attitudes. Ask them if they ever babysit or care for brothers and sisters. Find out what activities they participate in. You want to find someone who is responsible and level-headed.

Trust your instincts: If you are not comfortable with a person, do not feel you have to continue the interview. Once you do begin to feel comfortable, you can talk about some things you want the caregiver to do.

If you are interested in a caregiver, have her spend some time with your child. Be sure to notice your child's reactions. How does the caregiver respond to your child?

Once you've decided on a caregiver, go over with her exactly what the job requires. Some people prefer to write down the arrangements they have agreed to. Writing it down can save misunderstandings later on. Both of you can refer to the list of arrangements if there is a question. Of course, the agreement can be changed as your needs change. The box, "Your Agreement with Your In-Home Caregiver," lists some things you may want to include.

YOUR AGREEMENT WITH YOUR IN-HOME CAREGIVER

1. Days and hours caregiver is to work
2. Terms of payment, including:
   - Amount to be paid
   - When payment is due
   - Whether payment is by check or cash
   - Payment for overtime, care at odd hours, weekends
   - Payment for additional duties
   - Payment for holidays, sick leave, vacation, and emergencies
   - Social security to be paid
   - Health insurance you may provide
3. Instructions for special foods and medications
4. Instructions for any special needs of your child
5. Emergency plans in the event of accident, illness, fire, bad weather, or other emergencies
6. Telephone numbers and full names of yourself, spouse, doctor, hospital emergency room, neighbor or other persons to be called in emergencies
7. Feeding and sleeping schedules of all children in care
8. Agreement about visitors, phone calls, television and radio while the caregiver is working.
9. Other tasks caregiver is to perform, such as housework, shopping, preparing meals, and so forth
10. Amount of notice (and pay) necessary to end the arrangement.

FAMILY DAY CARE

Family day care is provided in the home of the caregiver, who is often a mother with children of her own. You may find a relative, friend, or neighbor who will care for your child this way. Or you may find a family day care home run by someone you do not already know.

Usually, just a few children are cared for at any one time. In some places, when a family day care home cares for 6 to 12 children, the local government calls it a "group home" and requires more than one adult to be on hand to care for the children. All States have some type of regulation for family day care. The regulations usually require the homes to meet health and safety standards.

Family day care could be an especially good arrangement for the situations outlined below. If your family is in a similar situation, you may want to consider this type of care.

If you are a single parent bringing up your child alone, you may want him or her to develop a close relationship with another adult besides yourself.

If you live in a rural area, family day care is likely to be the easiest to find.

If you have only one or two children needing care, family day care may cost less than other types.

If you want your child to grow close to a relative, such as a grandparent or an aunt, you may be able to arrange for that relative to care for your child in her home.

If you have a school-age child, he or she may be able to go to a neighborhood home and walk or take the same school bus to and from school.

At the same time, you should keep in mind these facts about family day care: Some homes go out of business without warning and a provider may decide overnight to stop caring for children. Because many homes are rarely or never inspected by government agencies, it will be up to you to make sure that adequate health and safety standards are being met.

Selecting A Family Day Care Home

At every family day care home you visit, your most important job will be to get some idea of what the provider is like. Some questions to ask are:

- How did you get started as a family day caregiver?
- How long have you been doing it?
- How many children do you care for each day? What are their ages?
- What types of things do you like to do with children?
- What sort of activities would my child take part in?
- How do you care for sick children?

You might also want to talk about the way you'd like your child treated. This would include such things as discipline, how much supervision to give, how the caregiver handles

YOUR AGREEMENT WITH YOUR FAMILY DAY CARE PROVIDER

Caregiver Services

1. Meals and snacks to be given
2. Specific indoor and outdoor activities to be encouraged
3. Toys, games, play equipment, and rooms available to your child
4. Infant equipment and furniture to be supplied (crib, high chair, playpen, and so forth).

Your Responsibilities

1. Times for arrival and pickup
2. Items to be brought from home (food, toys, change of diapers, change of clothes, toothbrush, infant furniture, and so forth)
3. Instructions for giving medicines or special food
4. Telephone numbers: Home, work, spouse's work, doctor, neighbor
5. List of names and phone numbers of people who may pick up your child from the caregiver.

Specific Policies

1. Use of other adults to help out
2. Use of other caregivers for emergencies, holidays, and vacations
3. Care for children when they are sick
4. Taking trips (need for permission or advance notice)
5. Advance written permission from you to obtain emergency treatment for your child, plus health insurance policy number, and agreement to call you in advance if possible
6. How and when your child goes to school
7. Whether your child may play with friends after school and amount of supervision needed
8. Amount of notice and pay needed to end the arrangement.

Terms of Payment

1. Amount to be paid
2. When payment is due
3. Whether paid by cash or check
4. Whether there are any other fees or expenses
5. Whether you will be charged for days when your child is not in care due to illness, holiday, or emergency
6. Payment for providing care at unusual hours or days.

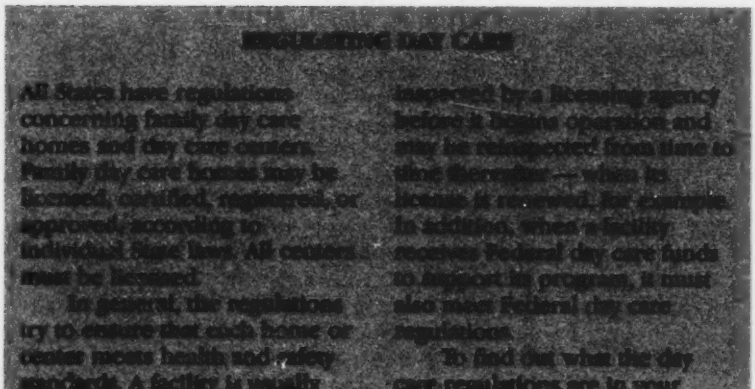
arguments among the children, and what happens when a child is particularly hard to handle. With school-age children, there are many sensitive subjects that you may also want to talk about, including sex education, religion, and permissible language.

Be sure you see all the rooms and outside areas your child will be using.

When you visit the caregiver with your child, you'll want to see how they get along with each other and with any other children in care. The caregiver may ask your child to join an activity with the other children for part of the time you are there. You may want to leave the room for a short while so the caregiver and the other children can spend some time alone with your child.

Once you've selected a family day care home — either during your first visit or after you've thought things over — be sure to go over the details of your arrangement with your new caregiver. This involves not only the payment but also the services to be provided and the responsibilities *both* you and the caregiver are expected to carry out.

You might want to write out the agreement in the form of a letter or as a list of items. That way, you and the caregiver will have the same understanding about many important details. The agreement can be changed at any time. The information in the box, "Your Agreement with Your Family Day Care Provider" can help you decide what to include.



REGULATING DAY CARE

All States have regulations concerning family day care homes and day care centers. Family day care homes may be licensed, certified, registered, or approved, according to individual State laws. All centers must be licensed.

In general, the regulations try to ensure that each home or center meets health and safety standards. A facility is usually inspected by a licensing agency before it begins operation and may be inspected from time to time thereafter — when its license is renewed, for example. In addition, when a facility receives Federal day care funds to support its program, it must also meet Federal day care regulations.

To find out what the day care regulations are in your

State, contact the State licensing agency listed in Part 4 of this guide. For information on the Federal HEW Day Care Regulations, write to the Day Care Division, Administration for Children, Youth and Families, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, P.O. Box 1182, Washington, D.C. 20013.

Be sure to ask about the home or center's license. But remember, licensing or other registration does not guarantee quality. It will be up to you to find out if the home or center is a safe, secure, and beneficial place for your child.

CENTER-BASED CARE

You are most likely to find center-based care if you live in a town or city, perhaps right in your neighborhood or where you work. There are many different kinds of center-based care: nursery schools, day care centers, and play groups are only a few. Some of these are set up to help prepare children for their school years. In others, the main concern is keeping the children safe and secure. Many do both. In this guide, the term "day care center" refers to all types of center-based care. Day care centers are places where children are cared for in a group away from their homes for a part of the day.

You may find that the centers you are looking into use particular programs of activities to help the children in care learn. Some follow a formal plan developed by a well-known educator. Others use a combination of programs they think works best for what they are trying to teach children. Still others use a program developed through day-to-day experience.

Below are some family situations that can be well met by center-based care. Is your family's situation similar to any of these? If so, you may want to think about using this type of care.

If you want to keep your child in the same day care arrangement for a long period of time — for example, for several years, some centers will care for children

from an early age until they go to school; some provide after-school care as well.

If your child needs special care because of a physical, mental, or emotional problem, some centers can provide the necessary equipment and care. Your child may benefit from being with other children who may or may not have handicaps.

If you want a certain educational, religious, or cultural setting for your child, you may be able to find a day care center that offers it.

If you need services for your child in addition to day care, some centers provide medical and dental checkups; some may also be set up to help families get in touch with the social services agencies they need.

You might also want to consider these points about center-based care: A center's program may not be similar to the way you would like your child cared for, so be sure to discuss it thoroughly with the center's director. Some children may not be comfortable in a large group for most of each day. Center-based care may not have the "home" atmosphere some children need.

Selecting A Day Care Center

Try to visit each center at a time when the children are active. You'll want to check out the staff, the children, the activities, and the center itself.

Feel free to question the center director. Talk over any concerns you have about your child and about the center. Find out what the rules are about parents visiting the center during the day. Ask if parents get to help make decisions about the center and to vote on any changes. Pay attention to how you feel about what you are seeing and the people you are meeting.

The Staff and Children

How your child feels about day care will be affected by the staff, the center director, and the caregiver your child will have most of the day. Notice how the staff gets along with all the children, not just with your child.

How Many Children? How Many Adults?

At each center you should ask about and observe the number of children being cared for by each caregiver. The number of children compared to the number of adults is known as the "child/staff ratio."

Some people believe that child/staff ratios are one of the best ways to decide if a child is being cared for safely and adequately in a day care center. Recent studies show this is particularly true for children below 3 years of age. One caregiver for every four or five children in this age group is considered satisfactory. For children 3 to 5 years of age, there should be one caregiver for every seven to nine children.

It is also important to notice the number of children and caregivers in a group, room, or class. This is called the "group size." Recent studies on group size have shown that if the group size is smaller, children will get better care. Groups of fewer than 20 children for children 3 to 5 years old and fewer than 12 for children younger than 3 years of age were shown to be better for the children.

If the number of children or staff makes you wonder whether your child will have the right amount of care, be sure to talk about it. Watch a group of children and their caregiver during your visit. Do the children have to wait a long time to catch the caregiver's attention? Does the caregiver seem too rushed to pay attention to each child? Do you feel the caregiver could take care of her group of children in an emergency?

What Happens at the Center?

Ask the center director to describe the day's activities. Find out what activities are offered for children your child's age. Are they the types of things that would interest your child? Do

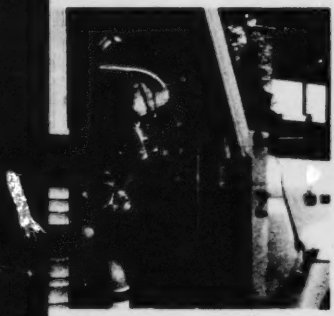
they seem too easy or difficult? Do the children at the center seem interested in what they are doing?

Enrolling Your Child

Most centers will require your child to visit before he or she joins. Even if your center does not, it's still a good thing to do, especially if your child is young. You may be able to enroll your child at the same time.

When you do enroll your child, the center will ask you for information about him or her and about your family. This information will help the center plan for your child, so it's a good idea to have it available.

- Names, addresses, and telephone numbers of your child, you and your spouse, and another person to contact in case of emergency.
- Work schedules of the adults in the home
- Doctor's name, address, and phone number
- Health information:
  - Immunizations
  - Previous illnesses
  - Allergies
  - Last physical examination (Some centers require each child to have an examination before enrolling or shortly afterwards.)
  - Special needs such as medication or rest
- Your child's growth information, such as:
  - Ages your child walked and talked
  - Sleeping habits
  - Eating habits
  - Toilet training
- Family information
  - Number of brothers and sisters
  - Their ages
- Financial information (if you are seeking aid)
  - Parents' and other family income
  - Parent or guardian income tax information
  - Other information to determine whether you are eligible for aid and other assistance.



If your child needs transporation and the center provides it, arrange for it now. Talk about the transportation plan with the director. Ask about insurance coverage. If you can, look at the bus, van, or car the center uses. Ask what will be done to keep your child safe. Many States require both a driver and an adult monitor in the vehicle. If transportation is not provided, ask about car pools or the best bus routes.

Some centers may have a contract for you to sign. This covers in writing the things you and the center agree to provide. The contract may include such things as the fee you will pay, the date the payments are due, the days and times your child will come to the center, the time you will pick up your child, the minimum length of time your child will stay at the center, and the ways that you or the center may change or end the agreement.

- If your center uses a contract, read it carefully.
- If you want to add or change something, do so.
- Ask questions *before* you sign.
- If you don't understand the contract, take it with you and ask a friend or community agency for help before you sign.

You will want to keep information about your child's care arrangement handy. You can fill out the day care information sheet on the next page. Or you can use your center's written form if it has one. Keep the information sheet near your home telephone and at work. Give copies to your spouse or to the person you count on in emergencies.

Be sure to find out from the director what your child should bring to the center on the first day. Some centers like the children to have their own blankets, lunches, or changes of clothes.

DAY CARE CENTER INFORMATION SHEET

_____ is going to the _____
(Child's name) (Center's name)

day care center, located at _____
(Address)

He/she goes there on:

☐ Monday _____ to _____ ☐ Thursday _____ to _____

☐ Tuesday _____ to _____ ☐ Friday _____ to _____

☐ Wednesday _____ to _____ ☐ Saturday _____ to _____

☐ Sunday _____ to _____

The phone number at the center is _____.

The teacher's name is _____.

The center director's name is _____.

To get to the center, we

☐ Take him/her to the center

We pick him/her up at _____.
(Time)

☐ Use the center's transportation. It picks him/her up at

_____ at _____.
(Time) (Place)

☐ The center provides transportation home by _____ PM/AM.

If the center closes early because of bad weather, our arrangement is to .

_____

_____

_____

My child can be picked up by

_____

(Name)

_____

(Address) (Telephone)

_____

(Name)

_____

(Address) (Telephone)

My phone number at work is _____.

If I cannot be reached, call _____ or _____.

My child's doctor is _____ _____.

(Name) (Telephone)

In case of accident or illness, the center is to:

☐ Call me or _____ at work

☐ Call my physician

☐ Take my child to _____ hospital/clinic.

My health insurance company and policy number are _____

_____

Full names of parent(s) or guardian(s) _____

_____

_____

(Signature)

_____

(Date)

Copies have been given to:

_____

MAKING DAY CARE WORK

Whether you have placed your child in a family day care home or a center or arranged to have someone come to your home, there are some things you can do to help make the day care arrangement work out well for everybody.

Developing a Good Relationship

Probably the most useful thing you can do is to develop a good relationship with the person who is caring for your child. This will take some time and attention. Not everyone does things exactly the same way, so you'll want to be ready to make changes and accept differences.

Here are some suggestions for making day care work:

- **Keep your side of the bargain.** Pay on time. Be on time. Don't add extra responsibilities without discussing them first and, perhaps, adjusting the fee. Provide those things — toys, food, clothes, and so forth — you have agreed to.
- **Talk things over.** A short chat each day may be all you need. Or you may want to set aside a regular time each week or month to discuss things. Both of you should bring up those little things that are bothering you before they have a chance to grow too big. You can talk about your child and what his or her needs are at this stage of development. And you may want to mention anything that has happened in your family's life that is affecting your child.
- **Consider the caregiver's feelings.** If you have a good arrangement, you'll want to do everything you can to keep it. Show the caregiver you appreciate what she is doing.
- **Participate any way you can.** Getting involved in your child's day care arrangement can make both you and your child happier. If you work all day, you may feel you can't do very much. But there are ways. Some centers have evening and weekend meetings and get-togethers for parents. They may have parents on advisory

boards to make decisions about the center policies, program, and budget. Family day care providers can use your ideas about things to do for the children. Your in-home caregiver would also welcome suggestions. The "Getting Involved" box suggests some ways to participate.

GETTING INVOLVED

1. Attend and join in at parent meetings at the center or family day care home. Ask to have meetings set up if they are not now held. Let the center director or the provider know when you are most able to attend. Suggest things you would like to discuss at these meetings.
2. Offer to collect free household items for the children to make things with. These include egg cartons, fabric and wood scraps, jars, and magazines.
3. See if the caregiver can use certain toys or equipment, then ask friends and neighbors to donate those things.
4. Volunteer to:
   - O Telephone other parents about events
   - O Go on a field trip
   - O Type letters to parents
   - O Plan a special event for children or parents, or both
   - O Make a special food for a birthday or a holiday
   - O Talk to the children in care about your culture or send things from home — objects, food, pictures — that will help them understand it.
5. If you have a skill — such as cooking, sewing, woodworking, playing a musical instrument, or storytelling — volunteer to use it in some way.
6. Clip articles from newspapers and magazines that can be used by the caregiver. These might include ideas for field trips, child development and child care discussions, recipes, and the like.
7. If your work would be an interesting place for children to visit, help set up a field trip there.
8. Ask the caregiver or center director if you may ask people in the community who have interesting hobbies or jobs to visit the home or center to talk about them.
9. Tell the center director or provider that you would be happy to talk with other parents who are considering sending their children there.
10. Contribute to or offer to start a newsletter about the home or center.

Getting Used to the New Routine

It's normal for your child to have some fears and misgivings about starting a day care arrangement. Children — like adults — need time to get used to new situations. Try to prepare your child for the change as far in advance as possible. Discuss any concerns. Talk about some of the new people he or she will meet and the new things he or she will do. Take him or her by the home or center a few times before the arrangement begins. If you're enthusiastic, chances are your child soon will be too.

Remember, this may be the first time your child has been separated from you. If you can, stay at the home or center for several hours during the first few days. When you leave, make sure your child knows you are going — don't sneak out when he or she is not looking. A goodby hug can help your child understand you will be coming back.

Depending on their ages, some children will "act out" their feelings by:

- Clinging to you and refusing to let go
- Having tantrums
- Forgetting their toilet training
- Eating all the time or not eating
- Waking up at night or having bad dreams
- Thumbsucking
- Bedwetting
- Having problems with school and friends
- Showing resentment toward you and the rest of the family.

Usually these problems are temporary. If your child is treated lovingly but firmly by both you and the caregiver, this behavior should go away in time. If the problem continues, see if you and the caregiver can find out exactly what it is that keeps upsetting your child.

Changing Your Day Care Arrangement

Are you moving? Is the family day care provider getting another kind of job? Is the center closing? Does your child need different hours of care or a new experience? Have things not worked out quite so well as you would like? There are many reasons why you may have to end or change your day care arrangement.

Try to prepare your child for the change. Children, especially younger ones, may misunderstand why things happen. It is important that your child doesn't feel he or she is to blame. "You are older now and must go to another school. You'll get to like it there too after a while"; "We don't have a car now so we'll be walking to Mrs. Smith's house down the street"; "I have to work late and Mrs. Jones can't stay after 6 o'clock" are examples of explanations that are helpful to children.

Give the caregiver as much notice as you can. Your written agreement or contract with the caregiver will come in handy here: It should spell out the amount of notice needed and any charges for ending the agreement.

A DAY CARE CHECKLIST FOR PARENTS

This checklist is designed to help you decide what things about a day care arrangement are most important to you and your family. It can also help you make sure your child's arrangement offers the things you believe are important.

Read through the checklist and circle those items you want the arrangement to provide. Then, when you talk to a possible caregiver or visit a home or center, decide whether the arrangement offers those things. Just check "yes" or "no." Use the checked-off list to help you make a decision.

Remember, this checklist tries to be as complete as possible. Not everything will apply to your family's situation. Look at the headlines in the lefthand column to see what you should read and what you can skip.

DOES YOUR CHILD'S CAREGIVER...

For All Children

	Yes	No
Appear to be warm and friendly?	☐	☐
Seem calm and gentle?	☐	☐
Seem to have a sense of humor?	☐	☐
Seem to be someone with whom you can develop a relaxed, sharing relationship?	☐	☐
Seem to be someone your child will enjoy being with?	☐	☐
Seem to feel good about herself and her job?	☐	☐
Have child-rearing attitudes and methods that are similar to your own?	☐	☐
Treat each child as a special person?	☐	☐
Understand what children can and want to do at different stages of growth?	☐	☐
Have the right materials and equipment on hand to help them learn and grow mentally and physically?	☐	☐
Patiently help children solve their problems?	☐	☐
Provide activities that encourage children to think things through?	☐	☐

		Yes	No
	Encourage good health habits, such as washing hands before eating?	☐	☐
	Talk to the children and encourage them to express themselves through words?	☐	☐
	Encourage children to express themselves in creative ways?	☐	☐
	Have art and music supplies suited to the ages of all children in care?	☐	☐
	Seem to have enough time to look after all the children in her care?	☐	☐
	Help your child to know, accept, and feel good about him- or herself?	☐	☐
	Help your child become independent in ways you approve?	☐	☐
	Help your child learn to get along with and to respect other people, no matter what their backgrounds are?	☐	☐
	Provide a routine and rules the children can understand and follow?	☐	☐
	Accept and respect your family's cultural values?	☐	☐
	Take time to discuss your child with you regularly?	☐	☐
	Have previous experience or training in working with children?	☐	☐
	Have a yearly physical exam and TB test?	☐	☐

		Yes	No
And If You Have An Infant or Toddler (Birth to Age 3)	Seem to enjoy cuddling your baby?	☐	☐
	Care for your baby's physical needs such as feeding and diapering?	☐	☐
	Spend time holding, playing with, talking to your baby?	☐	☐
	Provide stimulation by pointing out things to look at, touch, and listen to?	☐	☐

	Yes	No
Provide care you can count on so your baby can learn to trust her and feel important?	☐	☐
Cooperate with your efforts to toilet train your toddler?	☐	☐
"Child-proof" the setting so your toddler can crawl or walk safely and freely?	☐	☐
Realize that toddlers want to do things for themselves and help your child to learn to feed and dress him- or herself, go to the bathroom, and pick up his or her own toys?	☐	☐
Help your child learn the language by talking with him or her, naming things, reading aloud, describing what she is doing, and responding to your child's words?	☐	☐

And If Your Child Is A Preschooler (Aged 3 to 5 or 6)

	Yes	No
Plan many different activities for your child?	☐	☐
Join in activities herself?	☐	☐
Set consistent limits which help your child gradually learn to make his or her own choices?	☐	☐
Recognize the value of play and encourage your child to be creative and use his or her imagination?	☐	☐
Help your child feel good about him- or herself by being attentive, patient, positive, warm, and accepting?	☐	☐
Allow your child to do things for him- or herself because she understands children can learn from their mistakes?	☐	☐
Help your child increase his or her vocabulary by talking with him or her, reading aloud, and answering questions?	☐	☐

And If Your Child Is School Age (Aged 6 to 14)

	Yes	No
Give your child supervision and security but also understand his or her growing need for independence?	☐	☐
Set reasonable and consistent limits?	☐	☐
At the same time, allow your child to make choices and gradually take responsibility?	☐	☐
Understand the conflict and confusion that growing children sometimes feel?	☐	☐
Help your child follow through on projects, help with homework, and suggest interesting things to do?	☐	☐
Listen to your child's problems and experiences?	☐	☐
Respect your child when he or she expresses new ideas, values, or opinions?	☐	☐
Cooperate with you to set clear limits and expectations about behavior?	☐	☐
Understand the conflicts and confusion older school-age children feel about sex, identity, and pressure to conform?	☐	☐
Provide your child with a good adult image to admire and copy?	☐	☐

DOES THE DAY CARE HOME OR CENTER HAVE . . .

	Yes	No
For All Children		
An up-to-date license, if one is required?	☐	☐
A clean and comfortable look?	☐	☐
Enough space indoors and out so all the children can move freely and safely?	☐	☐
Enough caregivers to give attention to all of the children in care?	☐	☐

	Yes	No
Enough furniture, play things, and other equipment for all the children in care?	☐	☐
Equipment that is safe and in good repair?	☐	☐
Equipment and materials that are suitable for the ages of the children in care?	☐	☐
Enough room and cots or cribs so the children can take naps?	☐	☐
Enough clean bathrooms for all the children in care?	☐	☐
Safety caps on electrical outlets?	☐	☐
A safe place to store medicines, household cleansers, poisons, matches, sharp instruments, and other dangerous items?	☐	☐
An alternate exit in case of fire?	☐	☐
A safety plan to follow in emergencies?	☐	☐
An outdoor play area that is safe, fenced, and free of litter?	☐	☐
Enough heat, light, and ventilation?	☐	☐
Nutritious meals and snacks made with the kinds of food you want your child to eat?	☐	☐
A separate place to care for sick children where they can be watched?	☐	☐
A first aid kit?	☐	☐
Fire extinguishers?	☐	☐
Smoke detectors?	☐	☐
Covered radiators and protected heaters?	☐	☐
Strong screens or bars on windows above the first floor?	☐	☐

And If You Have An Infant or Toddler (Birth to Age 3)

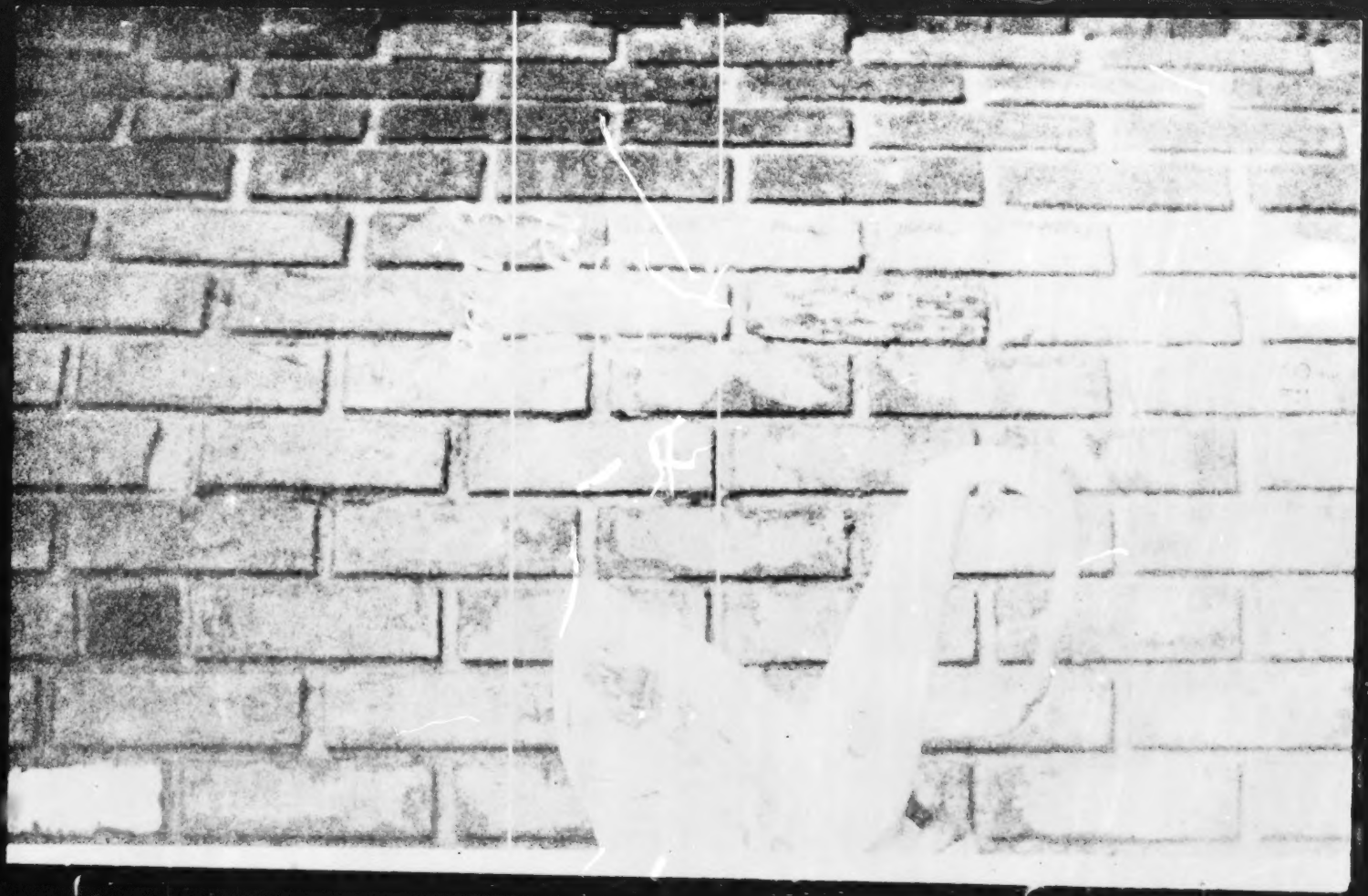
	Yes	No
Gates at tops and bottoms of stairs?	☐	☐
A potty chair or special toilet seat in the bathroom?	☐	☐

		Yes	No
	A clean and safe place to change diapers?	☐	☐
	Cribs with firm mattresses covered in heavy plastic?	☐	☐
	Separate crib sheets for each baby in care?	☐	☐
And If Your Child Is A Preschooler (Aged 3 to 5 or 6)	A stepstool in the bathroom so your preschooler can reach the sink and toilet?	☐	☐
And If Your Child is School Age (Aged 6 to 14)	A quiet place to do homework?	☐	☐
	Places to store personal belongings?	☐	☐

ARE THERE OPPORTUNITIES...

		Yes	No
For All Children	To play quietly and actively, indoors and out?	☐	☐
	To play alone at times and with friends at other times?	☐	☐
	To follow a schedule that meets young children's need for routine but that is flexible enough to meet the needs of each child?	☐	☐
	To use materials and equipment that help children learn new physical skills and control and exercise their muscles?	☐	☐
	To learn to get along, to share, and to respect themselves and others?	☐	☐
	To learn about their own and others' cultures through art, music, books, songs, games, and other activities?	☐	☐
	To speak both English and their family's native language?	☐	☐
	To watch special programs on television that have been approved by you?	☐	☐

		Yes	No
And If You Have An Infant or Toddler (Birth to Age 3)	To crawl and explore safely?	☐	☐
	To play with objects and toys that help infants to develop their senses of touch, sight, and hearing (for example, mobiles, mirrors, cradle gyms, crib toys, rattles, things to squeeze and roll, pots and pans, nesting cups, different sized boxes)?	☐	☐
	To take part in a variety of activities that are suited to toddlers' short attention spans (for example, puzzles, cars, books, outdoor play equipment for active play; modeling clay, clocks, boxes, containers, for creative play)?	☐	☐
		Yes	No
And If Your Child Is A Preschooler (Aged 3 to 5 or 6)	To play with many different toys and equipment that enable preschoolers to use their imaginations (for example, books, musical instruments, costumes)?	☐	☐
	To choose their own activities, for at least part of the day?	☐	☐
	To visit nearby places of interest, such as the park, the library, the fire house, a museum?	☐	☐
		Yes	No
And If Your Child Is School Age (Aged 6 to 14)	To practice their skills (for example, sports equipment, musical instruments, drama activities, craft projects)?	☐	☐
	To be with their own friends after school?	☐	☐
	To do homework?	☐	☐
	To use a variety of materials and equipment, including: art materials, table games, sports equipment, books, films, and records?	☐	☐
	To use community facilities such as a baseball field, a swimming pool, a recreation center?	☐	☐



Even in the best day care arrangements, problems will come up from time to time.

But you've worked hard to set up the arrangement you now have. You also simply may not have many day care choices available to you. And you know your child should not be moved from arrangement to arrangement unless it's absolutely necessary.

Therefore, you'll want to take care of each problem when it happens — before it gets so big it hurts your arrangement. Fortunately, most problems can be solved — with a little patience, good humor, and flexibility on everybody's part. You'll know when a problem is so serious you must find a new caregiver.

This section contains some common day care problems and suggests way to handle them.

Getting Along With The Caregiver

If the caregiver doesn't talk with you about your child

- Set up a regular time to talk with her about your child's growth and development.
- Make up a list of questions ahead of time so you'll remember to ask her everything you want to know.

If you have a serious disagreement with the caregiver

- Ask yourself if it would help to cool down for a while before bringing up the problem again?
- Arrange a meeting to discuss each other's feelings.
- When you do meet, stick to the point until you reach a solution. Don't bring up other, less serious problems now.

If your caregiver is a relative or close friend and you don't approve of some of her child care methods

- Separate those methods you can accept from those you simply cannot. Remember, a different way of doing things is not necessarily wrong.

- ○ Calmly discuss differences — one at a time — with her.
- ○ State how you would like something done and your reasons for it; listen to her reasons.
- ○ Compromise wherever you can.
- ○ Where no compromise is possible, point out it is confusing for children to be handled in two different ways. Tell her you, as parent, have major responsibility for deciding how your child should be reared. Insist that on important matters your wishes be followed.

If the home or center has a religious atmosphere you don't want for your child

- ○ Ask the caregiver not to impose her religion on your child.
- ○ Ask that your child be excused from religious exercises you don't approve of.
- ○ Make sure the caregiver does not make fun of your own religion to your child.

If your school-age child gives messages from school to the caregiver and she does not pass them on to you

- ○ Ask the caregiver to leave messages and other things for you in a particular place.
- ○ Check that place when you pick up your child.

If you and the caregiver disagree on how to handle thumbsucking, temper tantrums, masturbation, or other behaviors

- ○ Explain your feelings about this behavior to her. Learn her feelings. Discuss how you would like it handled.
- ○ Emphasize that you want the caregiver to treat your child's behavior in the same way you do.
- ○ If you are concerned, ask your doctor if these behaviors are typical for a child this age.

If the caregiver performs all tasks for your child — such as dressing, putting on shoes, etc. — and you want your child to learn to do those things

- ○ Be certain the clothes your child wears are easy to get in and out of.
- ○ Talk over with the caregiver some ways to encourage children to do things for themselves.
- ○ Make sure your child and the caregiver both know what you expect your child to do — for example, take off and put on boots, coats, and pants.

If you feel the caregiver does not make an effort to teach your child about your family's culture or values

- ○ Encourage your child to tell the caregiver about your home life by bringing objects and foods to the home or center, and by singing songs and telling stories.
- ○ Encourage the caregiver to treat differences with respect and interest.
- ○ Offer to visit the home or center to help everyone learn more about your culture.

If you feel the caregiver demands more from your child than your child can do at this stage of development

- ○ Talk with the caregiver about what children your child's age usually can and cannot do.
- ○ Be sure she understands you want your child to move along at a pace that is comfortable.

Your Child's Feelings and Behavior

If your child is very upset at the idea of a caregiver

- ○ Talk to your child about it.
- ○ Have your child meet the caregiver before the day care arrangement begins.
- ○ Have your child meet any other children in care.
- ○ Explain the situation to the caregiver so she will be aware of your child's feelings.

- Spend as much time as possible easing your child into the new situation.

If your child continues to be unhappy about day care after time has gone by

- Find out if your child's unhappiness occurs at a certain time, such as arrival or departure. Ask the caregiver to try to make this time easier for your child.
- Reassure your child about day care. Ask what you can do to make things better.
- Find out if there are specific things that make your child unhappy that could be changed.

If your child's school reports a change in your child — either in schoolwork or personality — since he or she has been in day care

- Make sure the day care arrangement you have picked is not upsetting your child.
- Ask the caregiver why she thinks the change happened.
- If your child doesn't like the day care arrangement, find out what your child doesn't like about it. See if you and the caregiver can work out the problem.

If your home situation changes and your child is upset

- Understand your child's feelings of insecurity. Be especially patient. Talk about what is going on at home.
- Be steady and reliable in your actions and reactions.
- Explain the matter to the caregiver and ask her to treat your child the same way you do so that your child will feel secure and loved.

If you find out your caregiver's home situation has undergone a change that affects your child

- Tell her that you are aware of the new situation and that you feel your child has been affected by it.
- Find out how long the situation will last and decide if your child can remain there until it is over.
- Explain to her that you must know about anything that affects your child.

If your child begins to forget his or her toilet training

- Find out how the caregiver handles the children's toilet needs.
- Make sure your child understands when and how he or she can use the facilities.
- Don't get too upset. Young children sometimes forget to go to the bathroom.
- See if there are reasons for your child to be unhappy or disturbed. Discuss these with the caregiver and decide on ways to overcome them.

If your child develops habits you don't like

- Talk to the caregiver and your child about the problem. See if you can find out what is causing the new habit and what can be changed.
- Work with your child to help him or her choose better behavior.
  Encourage the new behavior. Ask the caregiver to do the same.

Your Child's Health

If your child requires daily medication

- Ask the caregiver to give your child the medicine, and to follow your written instructions. If this is a day care center, find out what the rules are about medicine and if you need to have written instructions from your doctor.
- Write instructions clearly to the caregiver about (1) dosage, (2) refrigeration of

medicine, (3) times to be given, (4) normal reaction of your child to medicine, and (5) possible side-effects that might require emergency procedures.

- Set up special plans if your child refuses to take the medicine from the caregiver. For example, see if your doctor could change the times for giving the medicine so you could do it at home; arrange to have a visiting nurse stop by.

If your caregiver becomes ill

- Find out her plan for a substitute caregiver who is "on call" at all times. Try to meet the substitute.
- If she has no substitute, make arrangements with your employer to let you go pick up your child, or arrange ahead of time with a friend or a relative to do it.

If your child becomes ill

- At the start of your day care arrangement:
  1. Give the caregiver a paper that lists:
     - — Your work and home phone numbers
     - — Other family members' phone numbers
     - — Your doctor's phone number
     - — The hospital you prefer
     - — The name and phone number of a neighbor or relative who may be called in emergencies.
  2. Give the caregiver a signed paper saying that in emergencies you grant permission to the caregiver to take your child to the hospital or to your doctor.
  3. Tell the caregiver what nonprescription drugs (such as aspirin), if any — and the dosage — she may give your child. Ask her to call you before giving any medicine to your child.
  4. Find out what the caregiver plans to do with a sick child until the child can be picked up.
- Get to your child as soon as you can. Or have a relative or friend pick him or her up.

If you become ill

- At the start of your day care arrangement, find out if the caregiver is willing to care for your child extra hours if you become ill.
- Find out if there are neighbors or others who can help you at home until you can care for your child.

If your child frequently has unexplained bruises or marks

- Keep in mind that most bruises and scrapes occur when children are playing and even they may not remember getting them.
- Ask your child how an injury happened if he or she is old enough to talk. Notice his or her reactions.
- Ask the caregiver to tell you about any accidents, no matter how small they seem.
- Check with your doctor to see if medical attention is needed and if the marks can be explained.
- If you cannot resolve the matter satisfactorily, report it to your local child welfare agency or child protective services agency.

If the caregiver does not change your child's diapers regularly

- Remind her that your child is uncomfortable and the wet diaper hurts his or her skin.
- Provide plenty of diapers.
- Ask her to check your child's diaper often while your child is awake.

Your Child's Safety

If a disaster or emergency strikes

- At the start of the arrangement, talk with your caregiver about emergency plans in such events as fire, tornado, hurricane, flood, earthquake, power failure, snowstorm, transit strike, etc.
- Find out if there are provisions such as food, water, and blankets in case an emergency lasts.

- Ask the caregiver to hold drills so children and adults know how to act and what to expect.
- Make sure the caregiver has a fire extinguisher or a bucket of sand nearby; has a first aid kit and knows how to perform basic first aid; keeps flashlights ready.
- If you want your child released to other people in times of emergency, give the caregiver a list of names, addresses, and phone numbers ahead of time.

If you discover the caregiver sometimes leaves your child alone

- Let the caregiver know you don't want it to happen again.
- Ask her to have a substitute take over at such times. Get the name of the substitute and try to meet her.

If the caregiver transports your child in a car or vehicle

- Ask that you be told about it in advance.
- Ask that a trip permission slip be given to you for signing before each trip.
- Ask to see the vehicle your child will ride in. Does it have seat belts? Strong door locks? Good brakes?
- Ask that your child be protected by a seat belt or a car seat.

If the caregiver's car is not properly licensed or insured

- Write the caregiver a notice saying that your child cannot ride in her car until the violations are corrected.
- Ask that other plans for transportation be made until the situation is corrected.

Your Child's Clothing

If your child comes home from day care in another child's clothes or with some clothes missing

- Return the other child's clothes as soon as possible with a note asking for an exchange.

- See if there is a place for each child to store his or her clothes.
- Provide an extra set of clothes clearly marked with your child's name.
- Ask that any dirty clothes be sent home in a bag marked with your child's name.
- Ask the caregiver to let you look in the lost and found box for items misplaced by your child.

If your child's clothing is often torn

- Ask about the kinds of activities the children do.
- Dress your child in sturdy clothes, suited for active play.

Your Child's Schedule

If you have to pick up your child late

- Call as soon as you know you will be late.
- Agree in advance if there is a charge for late pickup.
- Make advance plans with a relative, neighbor, or other person to pick up your child when you cannot. Be sure to tell the caregiver who it will be.

If you find your school-age child is often late getting to day care from school

- Be sure the caregiver knows what time your child is due.
- Make sure your child understands the schedule.
- Try to find out why your child is late, and talk with the caregiver and your child's schoolteacher about it.
- Make sure everyone understands who is responsible for transporting your child from one place to another.
- Work out a plan with the caregiver to look for your child if he or she is late.

If the caregiver fails to follow your prearranged plan to pick up your school-age child in bad weather

- O Ask the caregiver why the plan failed.
- O Ask how the plan should be changed so it will work.

The Day Care Setting

If the setting is not kept clean

- O Note the trouble areas and talk with the caregiver about them. Be specific. Say where the the problem is — in the bathroom, the playground, the kitchen, etc.
- O If you can, talk with other parents about getting together to help clean up on a weekend or evening.
- O If the problem is severe and you are unable to get things improved, you might want to report it to local health authorities.

If the setting is too crowded when all the children are together

- O Ask if the local government limits the number of children one caregiver can look after.
- O When you arrange for day care, ask the caregiver how many children will be there at any one time.
- O If you are very concerned, ask your State licensing agency (listed in Part 4) for advice.

If undesirable people "hang out" regularly near or at the home or center

- O Ask the caregiver about it: Is she aware of it? Is she worried about it? Does it affect the children in any way?
- O Call the police for advice.

If the toys on hand are unsafe or too simple or too complicated for your child

- O Ask the caregiver to remove unsafe toys.
- O Find out what toys are best for your child and tell the caregiver.

- Ask the caregiver or others about local toy suppliers and toy donation centers in the community.
- Check with the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, Washington, D.C., for safety standards for toys, and share this information with the caregiver.

If you find out your child spends most of the time in day care watching television

- Ask the caregiver to turn on the TV set only for particular programs, rather than leaving it on all the time.
- Suggest programs you would like your child to see, as well as the kinds you don't want your child to watch.
- Offer to supply items, such as egg cartons, magazines, string, and cans, that can be used by your child to make things. For a free booklet about making inexpensive toys and games, write to the Consumer Information Center, Pueblo, Colorado 81009, and ask for Publication 005F, "Beautiful Junk."

Food And Nutrition For Your Child

If your child takes lunch but brings it back home uneaten

- Combine what your child likes with what's nutritious. If he or she doesn't like one vegetable, try another.
- Give your child smaller portions.
- Find out if there's enough time for meals.
- Make sure the caregiver is giving your child the food you prepared.
- Find out when snacks are provided, or if your child is sharing another child's lunch.
- Talk to a doctor or nurse about your child's eating habits if you feel your child is not eating enough.

If you are breastfeeding your child but must put him or her in a day care arrangement

- ○ Make sure the caregiver you select supports your decision to continue breastfeeding your child.
- ○ Write to the La Leche League, 9616 Minneapolis Avenue, Franklin Park, Illinois 60131, for information on how mothers who are not home all day manage to continue to breastfeed their children.

If you think the caregiver serves too much junk food, or the meals she serves are not varied, balanced, and healthful

- ○ Explain to the caregiver that you are trying to limit the amount of salt, sugar, and fats your child eats.
- ○ Work with her to make sure that your child's total daily diet contains:
  - — Three to four servings of milk or milk substitute (cheese, ice cream, or other foods made from milk)
  - — Four servings of fruit and/or vegetables (dark green or yellow vegetables, citrus fruit or tomatoes)
  - — Four servings of breads and cereals (enriched or whole grain)
  - — Two servings of meat, fish, poultry, eggs, or cheese (or dry peas and beans, nuts, and peanut butter).
- ○ Ask her to provide milk, juice, fruit, bread with a spread, or raw vegetables instead of sweet or salty snacks.
- ○ Get written information on nutrition from your local health department and share it with your caregiver. Or write to the Consumer Information Center, Pueblo, Colorado 81009, and ask for free publication 667F, "Food is More Than Just Something to Eat."

- Teach your child the importance of good nutrition so he or she won't feel deprived if other children eat junk food. You can get booklets that help children learn about food and nutrition by writing to the Consumer Information Center, Pueblo, Colorado 81009 and asking for free single copies of publication 524F, "The Thing the Professor Forgot," and publication 522F, "Good Food News for Kids."
- Serve wholesome foods at home, so your child will know what kinds of foods are best to eat.
- Ask the caregiver if you can provide food for your child for a reduction in the cost of care.

If your child is ready to begin to learn to feed him- or herself

- Let the caregiver know how you're going about it and provide the same kind of utensils used at home.
- Work together with the caregiver to find out how much your child is eating and how he or she is progressing.
- Agree on what your child will eat — commercially prepared food or homecooked food, or both.

If you want your child to eat only certain foods because of your family's religious or moral beliefs

- Before you begin an arrangement, make sure the caregiver agrees to follow your wishes regarding food.
- Help your child understand your beliefs so he or she won't feel so different from the other children.
- Suggest balanced and nutritious menus that answer your needs and that the caregiver can easily prepare.
- Prepare all your child's food and send it to the home or center.

If you find what you think is the perfect day care arrangement for your child but it costs more than you can afford, or if the cost of your arrangement goes up

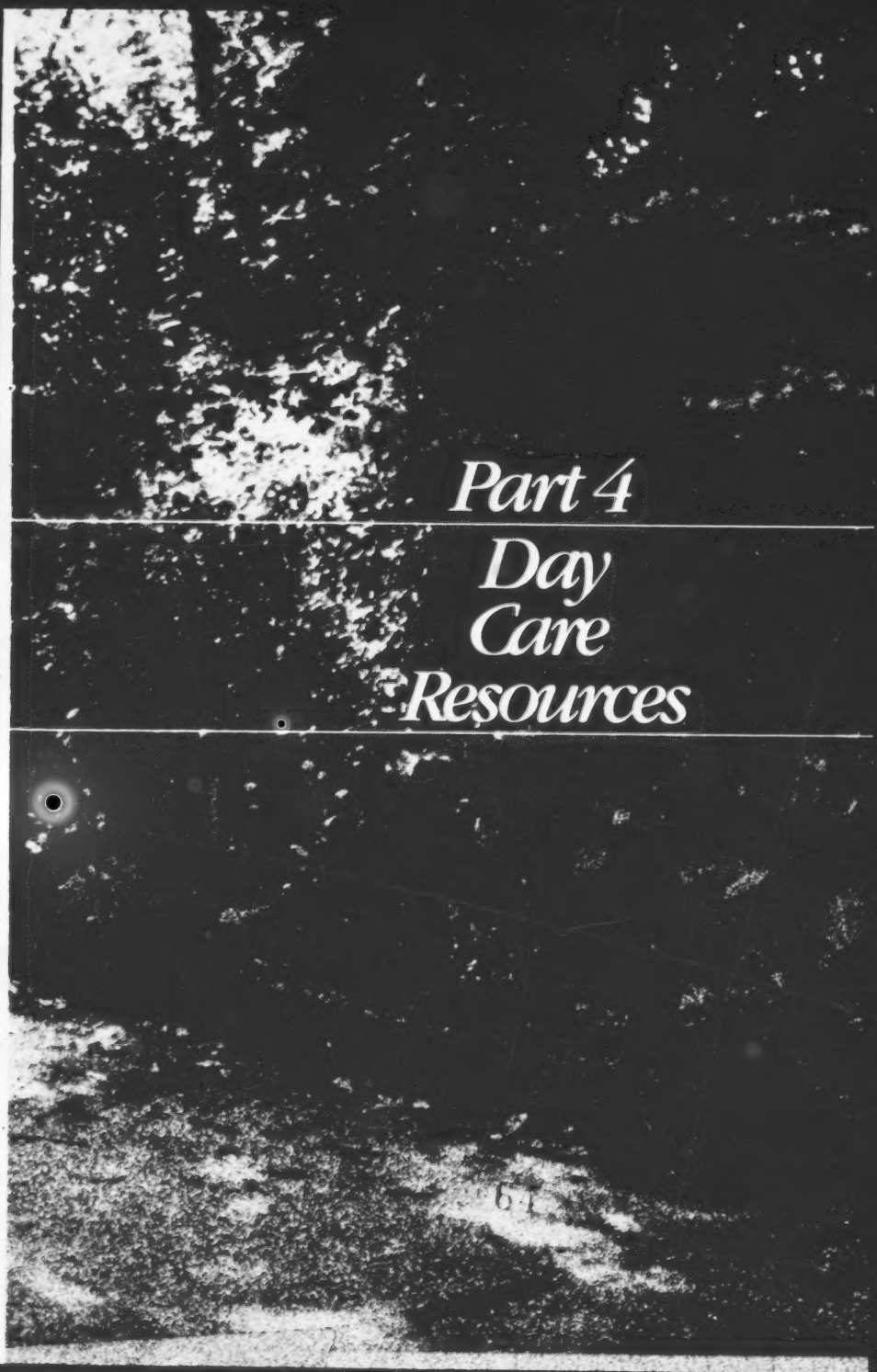
- ○ Ask if there is a sliding fee scale or other financial help for the family.
- ○ See if you can make up the difference in extra costs by volunteering some kind of service such as typing, repairing toys, or helping out part time.

If you find you don't have enough money to pay the caregiver on the day you agreed upon

- ○ As soon as you know about it, tell the caregiver that you will not be able to pay on time.
- ○ Propose a plan to pay by a specific time.

If the caregiver buys things for your child without asking you, then charges you for them

- ○ Tell her any future purchases for your child must first be cleared with you.
- ○ Explain to your child that all purchases are first discussed at home.



Part 4
Day Care Resources

This section contains some "resources" — people, organizations, and agencies — that may be of use to you as you select day care for your child.

One good resource for written information on day care is your public library; the librarian will be glad to help you find day care reference books, magazines, and other publications. If you are trying to contact an organization or an agency for help, the social services office of your State or county welfare department can often provide a telephone number or an address.

This section contains resources grouped according to these categories:

- Your Child's Growth and Development
- Child Care Agencies and Organizations
- Day Care Information for Children With Handicapping Conditions
- Single Parents/Parent Groups
- Child Abuse and Neglect and Crisis Situations.

YOUR CHILD'S GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Publications on Children's Growth and Development

If you need written information about your child's growth and development, you may want to write for the following publications which tell you how to order some Government booklets on that subject:

Catalog of Publications
Superintendent of Documents
U.S. Government Printing Office
Washington, D.C. 20402

Consumer Information Catalog
Consumer Information Center
Pueblo, CO 81009

Your local library should also have a good selection of books and other publications on child growth and development.

Professionals in Child Development and Early Childhood Education

In addition to reading, parents can go to professionals for information about their child's growth and development. These include:

- Pediatricians (doctors who specialize in the health care of children)
- Public health workers at your local department of health, welfare, or human resources
- Teachers in public schools, colleges and universities, and vocational-technical institutes
- Other professionals such as a nurse, psychologist, social worker, dietician, and guidance counselor.

CHILD CARE AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

National and International Organizations

The following national and international organizations are valuable sources of information and assistance regarding day care. To learn what they have to offer, write:

American Home Economics Education Association, Inc.
2010 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

American Parent's Committee, Inc.
1346 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

American Red Cross
Director, Nursing and Health Services
17th and D Streets, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20006

Association for Childhood Education International, Inc.
3615 Wisconsin Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20016

Child Development Associate Consortium, Inc.
805 Fifteenth Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20005

Children's Defense Fund, Inc.
1520 New Hampshire Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

Coalition for Children and Youth, Inc.
815 Fifteenth Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20005

Day Care and Child Development Council of America, Inc.
805 Fifteenth Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20005

Family Impact Seminar
1001 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Suite 732
Washington, D.C. 20036

National Association for Child Development and Education, Inc.
1800 M Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

National Association for the Education of Young Children, Inc.
1834 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20009

National Committee for Citizens in Education
410 Wilde Lake Village Green
Columbia, MD 21044

National Committee on Household Employment, Inc.
7705 Georgia Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20012

National Council of State Committees for Children and Youth
1614 Garfield
Laramie, WY 82070

National Organization for Women
Task Force on Child Care
45 Newberry Street
Boston, MA 02116

National Parents Federation for Day Care and Child Development, Inc.
429 Lewis Street
Somerset, NJ 08893

The Non-Sexist Child Development Project
Women's Action Alliance
370 Lexington Avenue
New York 10017

Organization Mondiale Pour Education Préscolaire (O.M.E.P. World Organization for Early Childhood)
1319 Denby Road
Baltimore, MD 21204
(sponsors International Year of the Child)

Ethnic and Other Special Organizations

For information regarding bilingual, ethnic, religious, and other types of specialized day care, write to:

American Montessori Society (AMS)
150 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10011

Aspira of America, Inc.
Research Division
11800 Sunrise Valley Drive
Reston, VA 22091

East Coast Migrant Head Start Projects
1234 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Room 823
Washington, D.C. 20003

Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod
Board of Parish Education
3358 South Jefferson Avenue
St. Louis, MO 63118

National Black Child Development Institute, Inc.
1463 Rhode Island Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20005

National Black Parents Organization
P.O. Box 6519
Washington, D.C. 20009

National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education
InterAmerica Research Associates, Inc.
1500 Wilson Boulevard
Suite 802
Rosslyn, VA 22209
Hotline 1-800/336-4560

National Conference of Catholic Charities
1346 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

National Council for Black Child Development, Inc.
P.O. Box 28353
Washington, D.C. 20005

National Council of Jewish Women
15 East 26th Street
New York, NY 10010

National Council of La Raza
1725 I Street, N.W., 2nd Floor
Washington, D.C. 20005

National Council of Negro Women, Inc.
1346 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

National Indian Education Association
1115 Second Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55403

National Jewish Welfare Board
Program Development Department
15 E. 26th Street
New York, NY 10010

Parent Cooperative Preschools International
14912 Rocking Spring Drive
Rockville, MD 20853

Save The Children
48 Wilton Road
Westport, CN 06880

United Church of Christ — Board for Homeland Ministries
Division of Health and Welfare
Child Care Resource Center
132 West 31st Street
New York, NY 10001

United Methodist Church, Board of Global Ministries
Health and Welfare Ministries Division
1200 Davis Street
Evanston, IL 60201

United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.
Association for Welfare Organizational Relations
475 Riverside Drive
New York, NY 10027

Federal Agencies Supporting Day Care

To learn more about federally supported day care programs and other Federal day care activities, write to the following agencies:

Administration for Native American Programs
Department of Health, Education, and Welfare
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20242

Agriculture, Department of
Administrator
Science and Education
Extension (SEA-Extension)
Washington, D.C. 20250

Agriculture, Department of
Director, Child Nutrition Division
Food and Nutrition Service
Washington, D.C. 20250

Appalachian Regional Commission
1666 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20235

Bureau of Indian Affairs
Department of the Interior
1951 Constitution Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20242

CETA — Comprehensive Employment and Training Administration
Department of Health, Education, and Welfare
7th and D Street, S.W.
Room 5008
Washington, D.C. 20202

CETA
Department of Labor
601 D Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20213

Community Services Administration
Office of Public Affairs
1200 Nineteenth Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20506

Cooperative Extension Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture
(Offices located in Land Grant Universities in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands; in the sixteen 1890 colleges in the United States; and at Tuskegee Institute, Tuskegee, AL)

Day Care Division
Administration for Children, Youth and Families
U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare
P.O. Box 1182
Washington, D.C. 20013

Division of Education Services
Bureau of Education for the Handicapped
Handicapped Preschool and School Program
U.S. Office of Education
Washington, D.C. 20202

Education, Department of
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Head Start
U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare
P.O. Box 1182
Washington, D.C. 20013

Housing and Urban
Development, Department of
Community Development Block
Grant Program
451 Seventh Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20410

Labor, Department of
Women's Bureau
200 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20210

Migrant Programs (Education)
FOB-6
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Room 2031
Washington, D.C. 20202

Migrant Programs (Health)
Parklawn
5600 Fisher Lane
Rockville, MD 20857

Title IV-A
(Aid to Families with Dependent
Children)
Office of Family Assistance
Department of Health,
Education, and Welfare
Switzer Building, 330 C Street,
S.W.
Room 4110
Washington, D.C. 20201

Title XX
Administration for Public
Services
Department of Health,
Education, and Welfare
Switzer Building, 330 C Street,
S.W.
Room 2215
Washington, D.C. 20201

Work Incentive Program
Department of Labor
601 D Street, N.W., Room 5100
Washington, D.C. 20213

State Day Care Agencies

For information on day care licensing in your State, contact the office listed below:

ALABAMA
Supervisor of Child Caring
Institutions and Agencies
State Department of Pensions
and Security
64 N. Union Street
Montgomery, AL 36130

ALASKA
Department of Health and Social
Service
Division of Social Services
Pouch H-05
Juneau, AK 99811

ARIZONA
Child Day Care Health
Consultant
Arizona State Department of
Health
1624 W. Adams Street
Phoenix, AZ 85007

ARKANSAS
Day Care Specialist
Department of Human Services
P.O. Box 1437
Little Rock, AR 72203

CALIFORNIA
Department of Social Services
744 P Street
Mail Station 19-50
Sacramento, CA 95814

COLORADO
State of Colorado
Department of Social Services
1515 Sherman Street
Denver, CO 80203

CONNECTICUT
Day Care Licensing
Connecticut State Department of Health
79 Elm Street
Hartford, CT 06115

DELAWARE
Chief, Day Care Licensing
Bureau of Child Development
P.O. Box 309
Wilmington, DE 19899

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Department of Human Resources
Licensing Certification Division
1406 L Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20005

FLORIDA
Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services
1317 Winewood Boulevard
Tallahassee, FL 32301

GEORGIA
Child Care Licensing Unit
618 Ponce de Leon Avenue
Atlanta, GA 30308

HAWAII
State Department of Social Services and Housing
Day Care Licensing Unit
Public Welfare Division
1319 Miller Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

IDAHO
Day Care Licensing
State of Idaho
Department of Health and Welfare
Statehouse
Boise, ID 83720

ILLINOIS
Day Care Licensing
Department of Children and Family Services
1 North Old State Capitol Plaza
Springfield, IL 62706

INDIANA
Day Care Supervisor
Indiana State Department of Public Welfare
141 S. Meridian Street, 6th Floor
Indianapolis, IN 46225

IOWA
Day Care Supervisor
Department of Social Services
Lucas State Office Building
Des Moines, IA 50319

KANSAS
Day Care Supervisor
Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services
State Office Building
Topeka, KS 66612

KENTUCKY
Department of Human Resources
Bureau for Social Services
275 E. Main Street
Frankfort, KY 40621

LOUISIANA
Department of Health and Human Resources
Office of Licensing and Regulation, Office of the Assistant Secretary
P.O. Box 3767
Baton Rouge, LA 70821

MAINE
State of Maine
Department of Human Services
Statehouse
Augusta, ME 04333

MARYLAND
Child Day Care Center
Coordinator
State Department of Health and
Mental Hygiene
201 W. Preston Street
Baltimore, MD 21201

MASSACHUSETTS
Office for Children
Director of Day Care Licensing
120 Boylston Street
Boston, MA 02116

MICHIGAN
Department of Social Services
300 S. Capitol Avenue
Lansing, MI 48926

MINNESOTA
Department of Public Welfare
Licensing Division
Centennial Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

MISSISSIPPI
Day Care Supervisor
Division of Family and Children's
Services
P.O. Box 4321
Fondren Station
Jackson, MS 39216

MISSOURI
Missouri Department of Social
Services
Division of Family Services
Broadway State Office Building
P.O. Box 88
Jefferson City, MO 65103

MONTANA
Social and Rehabilitation
Services
P.O. Box 4210
Helena, MT 59601

NEBRASKA
Day Care Welfare Consultant
Department of Public Welfare
P.O. Box 95026
Lincoln, NE 68509

NEVADA
State Department of Health
Department of Human Resources
505 E. King Street
Carson City, NV 89710

NEW HAMPSHIRE
Day Care Licensing
Division of Welfare
Concord, NH 03301

NEW JERSEY
Division of Youth and Family
Services
Bureau of Licensing
1 S. Montgomery Street, #400
Trenton, NJ 08625

NEW MEXICO
Child Care Licensing
725 St. Michael's Drive
P.O. Box 968
Santa Fe, NM 87503

NEW YORK
Division of Day Care
New York City Health
Department
350 Broadway
New York, NY 10013

NORTH CAROLINA
Office of Child Day Care
Licensing
Department of Social Services
P.O. Box 10157
Raleigh, NC 27602

NORTH DAKOTA
Supervisor of Children and Family Day Care Services
State Capitol Building
15th Floor
Bismarck, ND 58501

OHIO
Department of Public Welfare
Division of Social Services
30 E. Broad Street
30th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

OKLAHOMA
Children's Day Care Services
State Department of Public Welfare
P.O. Box 25352
Oklahoma City, OK 73125

OREGON
Department of Human Resources
Children's Service Division
198 Commercial Street, S.E.
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PENNSYLVANIA
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1514 N. Second Street
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Columbia, SC 29202

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State Office Building
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State Department of Public Welfare
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Department of Social Services
Division of Family Services
150 W. North Temple, Room 370
P.O. Box 2500
Salt Lake City, UT 84110

VERMONT
Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services
Licensing and Regulations Unit
State Office Building
Montpelier, VT 05602

VIRGIN ISLANDS
Department of Social Welfare
P.O. Box 539, Charlotte Amalie
St. Thomas, Virgin Islands 00801

VIRGINIA
Division of Licensing
8007 Discovery Drive
Richmond, VA 23288

WASHINGTON
Bureau of Children's Services
Licensing Program
Department of Social and Health Services
Mail Stop OB-2, 41-D
Olympia, WA 98504

WEST VIRGINIA
Day Care Unit
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1900 Washington Street, E.
Charleston, WV 25305

WISCONSIN
Department of Health and Social Services
1 West Wilson Street, Room 384
Madison, WI 53702

WYOMING
Day Care Supervisor
Division of Public Assistance
State Office Building
Cheyenne, WY 82002

DAY CARE INFORMATION FOR CHILDREN WITH HANDICAPPING CONDITIONS

Your child may require special care as a result of a physical, emotional, mental, or learning disability. Because some day care settings are not equipped to care for your child, you may have to spend extra time and effort selecting an arrangement. The following organizations and government agencies may be able to provide some information about day care for children with special needs.

State Agencies for Children With Handicapping Conditions

Most States have departments with titles similar to those listed below. Call your State welfare department for specific titles of departments, telephone numbers, and addresses.

- City or county Superintendent of Schools
- Health Department — Maternal-Child Clinics
- Education Department — Division of Special Education
- Departments of Mental Health and Mental Retardation — Clinics, Special Education.

Federal Agencies for Children With Handicapping Conditions

The following Federal agencies may also be of help:

Administration for Children, Youth and Families
Head Start, Child Care Services
P.O. Box 1182
Washington, D.C. 20013

Bureau of Education for the Handicapped
OE-BEH Donohoe Building
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Department of Health, Education, and Welfare
Rehabilitation Services Administration
Office of Public Affairs
330 C Street, S.W., #1427
Washington, D.C. 20207

Health Services Administration
5600 Fishers Lane
Rockville, MD 20852

National Institute of Mental Health
5600 Fishers Lane
Rockville, MD 20852

National Organizations for Children With Handicapping Conditions

The following organizations provide information and perhaps services to families with special needs. If you need information or help, look for the names of some of the organizations listed below in your telephone directory or call the social welfare department of your city or county.

Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf
3417 Volta Place, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20007

American Association on Mental Deficiency
5101 Wisconsin Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20007

American Foundation for the Blind
15 West 11th Street
New York, NY 10011

Association for the Aid of Crippled Children
345 East 46th Street
New York, NY 10017

Association for Children with Learning Disabilities
4156 Library Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15234

Association for Retarded Citizens, Inc.
405 Riggs Road, N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20011

Closer Look Information Center
P.O. Box 1492
Washington, D.C. 20013

Council for Exceptional Children
1920 Association Drive
Reston, VA 22091

Cystic Fibrosis Foundation
6000 Executive Boulevard, Suite 309
Rockville, MD 20852

Epilepsy Foundation of America
1828 L Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

Mental Health Association
1800 N. Kent Street
Arlington, VA 22209

Muscular Dystrophy Associations of America
810 Seventh Avenue
New York, NY 10019

National Easter Seal Society
2023 West Ogden Avenue
Chicago, IL 60612

National Foundation – March of Dimes Headquarters
P.O. Box 2000
White Plains, NY 10605

National Society for Autistic Children
169 Tampa Avenue
Albany, NY 12208

United Cerebral Palsy Association, Inc.
66 East 34th Street
New York, NY 10016

SINGLE PARENTS/PARENT GROUPS

Single parents and other parents who need advice and assistance may find the following resources helpful:

Big Brothers/Sisters of America
220 Suburban Station Building
Philadelphia, PA 19103
(Check your telephone book for local chapters.)

Boys' and Girls' Clubs of America
771 First Avenue
New York, NY 10017
(Check your telephone book for local chapters.)

Childrens' hospitals

Churches, synagogues, temples, church clubs, Jewish community centers

Local self-help groups, chapters of national women's organizations, child care advocacy groups

Local "Y" groups such as YWCA, YMCA, YWHA, and YMHA

Momma: A Magazine for Single Mothers
P.O. Box 567,
Venice, CA 90291
(A magazine dealing with the needs of over seven million single mothers in the United States.)

Parent-teacher associations

Parents Without Partners
7910 Woodmont Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20014
(This organization has local chapters throughout the country which deal with the needs of single parents.)

Social services agencies, Red Cross Chapters

YMCA—Circular #6
291 Broadway
New York, NY 10007
(This circular provides a listing of single parent groups in the United States.)

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT AND CRISIS SITUATIONS

Child abuse takes many forms and occurs for various reasons. The forms may range from child neglect to physical abuse. If you think you may need help, seek it immediately. If you suspect that a caregiver is abusing your child, contact your local welfare or social services office.

Sometimes during family emergencies or crises, it is helpful if the children can be placed in facilities offering 24-hour care. These services are called "crisis," "respite," or "emergency" care. They are used when families have problems which might lead to the abuse or neglect of their children; when parents suddenly need emergency hospital care; or when parents need a rest from the strains of caring for a child with a handicapping condition. To find out whether such care is available in your area, contact your local public health department or social services or welfare department.

Some other resources to help you are:

National Center on Child Abuse
and Neglect
U.S. Department of Health,
Education, and Welfare
Administration for Children,
Youth and Families
P.O. Box 1182
Washington, D.C. 20013

Parents Anonymous
22330 Hawthorne Blvd., #208
Torrence, CA 90505
(This is a national self-help
parents' organization, with
local chapters throughout the
U.S. The toll-free number is
800/421-0353.)

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A PARENT'S GUIDE TO DAY CARE

Reader Evaluation Form

Your comments about this publication will be very helpful to us. Please fill out this form, fold it where indicated, staple or tape it closed, and mail it. It is already stamped and addressed.

1. Does the publication give you a better understanding of what to look for in a day care setting? Yes ☐ No ☐

   If no, why not? _____

   _____

2. Does the publication give you a better understanding of what the caregiver should provide for your child? Yes ☐ No ☐

   If no, why not? _____

   _____

3. Is the publication easy to read and understand? Yes ☐ No ☐

   If no, why not? _____

   _____

4. Does the publication omit any information that you think should be included? Yes ☐ No ☐

   If yes, what _____

   _____

5. Does the publication contain any information that you think should not be included? Yes ☐ No ☐

   If yes, what _____

   _____

6. What things were most helpful to you in this publication?

   _____

   _____

7. Other comments: _____

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Title (parent, day care worker, educator, etc.) _____

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